

Day 13: Hayfever by PaperBodies

Series: [Harringrove April Challenge \[7\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Allergies, Fluff, M/M, Pre-Relationship, dumb boys

Language: English

Characters: Billy Hargrove, Steve Harrington

Relationships: Billy Hargrove/Steve Harrington

Status: Completed

Published: 2021-04-13

Updated: 2021-04-13

Packaged: 2022-04-01 01:56:33

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,021

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

And then spring rolled around, and the pollen count started climbing, and Steve refilled his prescription for allergy medication not a moment too soon. And Billy Hargrove started walking around town looking miserable—nose red, tissues trailing from every pocket, eyes streaming. He sniffled his way through every class. Steve spent a week or so enjoying Billy's suffering, and absolutely refused to feel bad about it. His face had hurt for ages; Billy absolutely deserved the temporary discomfort of bad allergies.

Day 13: Hayfever

It wasn't until spring rolled around that Steve got his first glimpse past Billy Hargrove's facade. Before November, he had been all antagonism, sneering and taunting and demonstrating a casual disregard for the concept of Steve's personal space. After November, he retreated into a chilly silence. Steve hadn't actually realized just how much time Hargrove spent fucking with him until he stopped. It was nice, at first, to move through his days without Billy constantly on his heels, but then it just got weird. Because Billy may have stopped messing with him, but he hadn't stopped paying attention. Everywhere Steve went, he felt those eyes on him, and he was constantly turning around just to meet that intense blue gaze. It kept Steve on edge, constantly expecting something to happen, but nothing ever did. Billy kept his distance, never talked to Steve. He just stared.

And then spring rolled around, and the pollen count started climbing, and Steve refilled his prescription for allergy medication not a moment too soon. And Billy Hargrove started walking around town looking miserable—nose red, tissues trailing from every pocket, eyes streaming. He sniffled his way through every class. Steve spent a week or so enjoying Billy's suffering, and absolutely refused to feel bad about it. His face had hurt for *ages*; Billy absolutely deserved the temporary discomfort of bad allergies. Steve fully expected that Billy would eventually show up breathing easily again; it wasn't like it was a tough diagnosis. Or treatment. Steve had his own pills in his backpack and eyedrops next to his sink at home. But apparently Billy either didn't know that or didn't care, because he was just as miserable on Monday as he had been the previous week. It was possible that Steve was starting to feel just the tiniest bit bad for him.

Billy stared at himself in the bathroom mirror. He was so fucking sick of this, but of course Neil refused to take him to the doctor. It was "just seasonal allergies," after all, surely he didn't need a doctor for that. Turns out maybe he did; the over-the-counter stuff he could afford wasn't doing shit for him.

"If you sneeze one more time..." he warned his reflection. There was a snort behind him, and he turned around to see Steve Harrington. He flushed a little. He thought he was alone, obviously.

"Not even *you* can fight allergies through sheer force of will, Hargrove," Steve said. He swung his backpack up onto the sink next to Billy's and started digging through it.

"I'm not allergic to anything," Billy said stubbornly, the effect ruined a little bit by his stuffed-up nose. Steve looked at him incredulously.

"Maybe not in California," he said, "but you're clearly allergic to something *here*." Steve found what he was looking for in his bag. He pulled out a little bottle and unscrewed the cap, tipping a pill into his hand. He held it out to Billy, who looked at it suspiciously. Steve rolled his eyes.

"I am not nearly invested enough in this—" he gestured between them— "to carry around a bottle of pills on the off chance that I'll get the opportunity to poison you with one. Take it or don't," he said, placing the pill carefully on the edge of the sink. "But you'll be a lot happier if you do." He closed the bottle and tossed it back into his bag. Then he put his backpack on and left the bathroom. Billy stared at the pill for another moment, and then took it. It wasn't until later that he realized, with a little shock of surprise, that the only thing Steve had done in the bathroom was give him medication.

He was even more surprised the following day, when Steve cornered him at his locker at the end of the day. He had arrived that morning actually able to breathe, which felt miraculous, but he wasn't about to track Steve down to beg him for more pills. He still had his dignity. As it turned out, though, Steve apparently wasn't going to make him beg. He was nicer than Billy would have been, had the roles been reversed, but he didn't waste time on pleasantries.

"Here," Steve said, holding out a paper bag. Billy glanced at him and raised an eyebrow. He really wanted what he suspected was in that bag—he thought he could actually feel his nasal passages starting to close up again—but that didn't mean he had to let Steve know that.

"What is that, Harrington?" he asked warily. Steve huffed

impatiently.

“You know what’s in the bag. Just take it, Hargrove.” Billy opened his mouth, ready to argue about it, but Steve rolled his eyes and spoke before Billy could. “I don’t feel sorry for you, and you’re not a charity case or whatever.” Billy closed his mouth. When had he become so predictable? Steve kept talking. “I’m doing this for me. I have enough trouble concentrating in history without you sniffing the entire time, so just take the goddamn bag.” Billy stared at it for a moment and then reached out and took it. He wanted to ask why Steve was being nice to him, but he also didn’t want to call attention to it and run the risk that Steve would think better of it and take the bag back.

“I could tutor you,” Billy said abruptly, instead of *thank you*. Steve’s eyebrows went up.

“What?” he asked.

“In history.” Billy cleared his throat. “I’m doing well in it. So if you need, um. If you need help, I could...” Steve watched him struggle through, a slow smile spreading over his face.

“Sure,” he finally said. “Come over Thursday? Bring all your notes. Mine are a mess.” Steve slapped him on the shoulder and walked off down the hall. Billy watched him go, ignoring the warmth trying to spread in his chest. Just as Steve turned the corner, Billy sneezed three times in quick succession. He shook his head and headed off to find a water fountain. He needed a goddamn allergy pill.

Author's Note:

Every day, I have less of a clue what I'm even doing with these, but I'm determined to keep going. Enjoy this lil ficlet about allergies?

I'm on tumblr @paperbodiesamongthestars